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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9025
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RUEHGT/AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA PRIORITY 0221
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STATE FOR WHA/BSC, WHA/AND

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/02/2016

TAGS: [UNSC](#) [PREL](#) [CI](#) [VZ](#)

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR DISCUSSES VENEZUELA'S UNSC CANDIDACY
WITH TOP FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL

REF: STATE 69313

Classified By: Ambassador Craig A. Kelly. Reasons: 1.4 (b and d).

¶1. (C) The Ambassador called on Foreign Ministry Director General for External Relations Carlos Portales on May 2, to discuss the GOC's views on Venezuela's UNSC candidacy following Foreign Minister Foxley's recent meetings in Washington (reftel). The Ambassador noted that our information indicated considerable support for Guatemala's candidacy, particularly in Europe, Asia and Latin America. Portales thanked the Ambassador for the information. He commented that FonMin Foxley had briefed him on his visit and said that Chile had not made a decision.

¶2. (C) During a follow-on, one-on-one meeting, Portales suggested that additional U.S. pressure on the Bachelet administration could be counterproductive. Portales explained that President Bachelet is a synthesizer who needs time, stressing that "Concertacion (center-left) coalition politics and regional considerations" needed to be properly managed. Portales asserted that Chavez' statements and actions were undermining Venezuela's candidacy, and predicted that Chavez would continue to "shoot himself in the foot."

¶3. (C) Portales cautioned the U.S. from pressing Chile to take "an early decision." The Ambassador explained that the U.S. was increasingly concerned that Chile, one of the most democratic countries in the Hemisphere, had not come around to the fact that Venezuela already had proven itself unfit for an international body as important as the United Nations.

By waiting on the issue, Chile helps convey to Chavez that he has the Southern Cone's blessing. The Ambassador asked if giving Chile time would produce the right decision (e.g. a Chilean vote against Venezuela). Portales said, in his personal opinion, he believed it would.

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